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**Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

# Comprehensive review of the Strategic Military Cell

## Report of the Secretary-General

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*Summary*

The General Assembly, in paragraph 14 of its resolution 61/250 B of 2 April 2007, requested the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive review of the Strategic Military Cell, including clarification of its role and functioning, its relationship with the Military Division and lessons learned for the military planning of large-scale and complex existing and future peacekeeping operations, as well as proposals for strengthening the capacity of the Military Division, and to report to it thereon at the second part of its resumed sixty-first session. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

The Strategic Military Cell is an innovation to support immediate planning needs for a specific peacekeeping operation and it is considered essential that a comprehensive review of the Cell be undertaken in order to ascertain its comparative advantage and the feasibility of its application for the future. At the current stage, with the Cell having been operational for just over six months, any attempt to review the Strategic Military Cell experience can be viewed only as interim and provisional. The present report should therefore be regarded as the first step in a comprehensive review process and its observations of a preliminary nature. Ongoing review will be required as the Strategic Military Cell progresses in carrying out its appointed tasks to support the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Section I describes the background on the establishment of a Strategic Military Cell in 2006. Section II describes the role, structure and functions of the Cell, its main activities to date and its relationship with other parts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Section III provides some initial observations on the Strategic Military Cell, and its significance for the planning of complex United Nations peacekeeping operations and observations are set out in section IV. Annex I provides the terms of reference of the Strategic Military Cell, while annex II contains a summary of the outputs of the Cell for the first six months since its establishment. Annex III provides the organization chart of the Cell.

# I. Background

1. It is important to recall the dramatic and complex conditions in which the decision to establish a strategic military cell at Headquarters was taken in August 2006. Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) of 11 August 2006 marked the crucial step in the cessation of month-long hostilities in Lebanon on 14 August 2006. Intensive fighting left about 1,200 dead, thousands injured, the displacement of almost 1 million civilians and widespread destruction in Lebanon. By the same resolution, the Security Council authorized UNIFIL to undertake a series of immediate and substantial new tasks in addition to those mandated under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The new UNIFIL mandated responsibilities are to: (a) monitor the cessation of hostilities; (b) accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deployed throughout the South, including along the Blue Line, as Israel withdrew its armed forces from Lebanon; (c) coordinate its activities with the Government of Lebanon and the Government of Israel; (d) extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons; (e) assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps towards the establishment of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL, as referred to in paragraph 8 of the resolution; and (f) assist the Government of Lebanon, at its request, to implement paragraph 14 of the resolution.

2. To enable UNIFIL to carry out those additional tasks, the Security Council, also in resolution 1701 (2006), authorized an increase in the force strength of UNIFIL from 2,000 to a maximum of 15,000 troops. It further requested the Secretary-General to urgently put in place measures to ensure that UNIFIL is able to carry out the functions envisaged in the resolution. Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, UNIFIL resumed ground and air patrols throughout its area of operation as carried out prior to the hostilities that commenced in July 2006. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations immediately initiated efforts with permanent missions of Member States in order to seek and incorporate the views of potential contributors to the expanded Force. In the space of one week, a draft concept of operations, reinforced rules of engagement, a detailed list of potential tasks and initial force generation plans were elaborated by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/670) on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). The scope of the challenges facing the expanded UNIFIL, and the need to put in place flexible administrative and financial arrangements, was highlighted in the report. In addition, the need for innovative measures to augment the Department's military planning capacities was underscored. The Secretary-General stated in that report that "the scope and complexity of military tasks to be performed by UNIFIL may require further strengthening of the Military Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. A military cell, dedicated to UNIFIL, drawing on the existing resources of the Military Division and augmented by officers from key troop-contributing countries, will be needed to provide military guidance at the strategic level".

3. In paragraph 24 of his subsequent report (S/2006/730) to the Security Council, the Secretary-General provided further details on the modalities by which the reinforced planning capacity would be formed. Since his earlier report to the Security Council (S/2006/670) and after further review, it became apparent that a

partial and potentially piecemeal resource increase to the Military Division would be insufficient to meet the significant and immediate expansion requirements of the Force. In addition to existing troop-contributing countries, the rapid and substantial expansion of UNIFIL and the new tasks assigned to the Force required the engagement of contributors that had not deployed substantial levels of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations in more than 10 years. That engagement contributed an additional level of challenge and complexity to the planning and deployment of UNIFIL. Moreover, in the volatile and sensitive environment in which UNIFIL redeployment would take place, a relatively intensive degree of Headquarters support, including contingency and longer-term planning to anticipate and respond to evolving conditions appropriately, would be required to support the Force. The Strategic Military Cell was envisaged to provide sufficient additional dedicated capacity for UNIFIL to meet those challenges, drawing on the institutional expertise of the Military Division, and staffed by military officers from key troop-contributing countries, in a focused Headquarters structure. The Strategic Military Cell was established with the full complement of expert military capacities to ensure that the UNIFIL expansion, deployment and additional mandated responsibilities were conducted with and supported by sufficient dedicated capabilities, employing best practices from contemporary military planning and operational experience.

4. On behalf of the Security Council, the President, in his statement of 12 December 2006 (S/PRST/2006/52), reiterated its full support to UNIFIL and looked forward to the completion of its deployment in the early part of 2007. In the same statement, the President expressed the strong appreciation of the Council to Member States which have contributed to UNIFIL in the past and since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) and noted the establishment of the Strategic Military Cell dedicated to UNIFIL at United Nations Headquarters.

5. Subsequently, on 5 March 2007 a formal briefing was provided to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on the mandate, structure and work of the Strategic Military Cell during its substantive session.

## II. Structure, functions and activities of the Strategic Military Cell

6. As outlined above, the Strategic Military Cell was established to deal with the particular military, security and operational conditions in which UNIFIL was strengthened in the immediate aftermath of the recent conflict in Lebanon. The expansion of UNIFIL occurred in the context of an extremely fragile political situation, dominated by a high risk of renewed conflict prior to the deployment of Lebanese armed forces and UNIFIL forces. The rapid deployment of UNIFIL was considered essential in securing the fragile ceasefire, which was made more complex by the volatile situation on the ground. The agreement to establish the Strategic Military Cell enabled participating troop-contributing countries to rapidly deploy to the expanded Force, with a view to decreasing tension along the Blue Line and preventing further hostilities.

7. In addition to the compelling need for its rapid reinforcement, the scope of the new tasks assigned to UNIFIL required additional military strategic guidance and planning capacity in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In response to the request of the Lebanese Government, a Maritime Task Force was established for the

first time in the history of peacekeeping. The volatile operational environment underscored the need for enhanced capacities to address both needs assessment for the successful implementation of the expanded UNIFIL mandate and, as that process evolves, contingency planning and options developed to address anticipated as well as potential scenarios. Moreover, the increase in the number of troop-contributing countries for UNIFIL, as well as the additional assets and materiel required, and the tight deployment timeline, placed a considerable and additional burden on the Secretariat to implement the expansion of the Force. The Strategic Military Cell was therefore established to augment the strategic planning support capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in those areas.

8. The Strategic Military Cell is responsible for the provision of strategic military advice to the senior management of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for the Force Commander and Head of Mission of UNIFIL. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell, as focal point for that advice, reports to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and functions in close coordination with the Assistant Secretaries-General for Operations and Mission Support and the Military Adviser.

9. The Strategic Military Cell contributes to the monitoring and assessment of the operational environment in Lebanon and of UNIFIL military activities at Headquarters, including through the provision of threat assessments and reporting on UNIFIL military activities. It provides responsive strategic military guidance to UNIFIL through routine and non-routine planning; regular review and assessment of the effectiveness of the military component of UNIFIL, and recommends adjustments, as necessary; ongoing assessment of the current situation, risk assessment and scenario development for contingency planning options. It also supports the operational planning of the Force, supplementing the initial concept of operations, as requested by the Force Commander.

10. In addition to those strategic military guidance tasks, the Strategic Military Cell maintains regular communications with troop-contributing countries, providing regular updates on the status and progress in the implementation of the military aspects of the Force and dialogue, as required, on all urgent issues. It supports the Military Division's management of the force generation process and regular rotation. In carrying out those functions, the Strategic Military Cell has developed and maintains contacts with the Military Advisers of the Permanent Missions in New York of the countries contributing troops to UNIFIL to discuss military matters of concern and to share information, in the same manner that the Military Division maintains such contacts in respect of other peacekeeping operations. In undertaking those tasks, the Strategic Military Cell liaises with other components of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to ensure an integrated approach to the strategic planning and support of UNIFIL from Headquarters. Annex I sets out the terms of reference of the Strategic Military Cell, including functions and responsibilities.

11. The activities of the Strategic Military Cell to date include the initial Force Requirement Review to configure the UNIFIL force in accordance with its expanded mandated tasks within the current operational environment. The Cell continues to supplement the UNIFIL concept of operations with additional strategic guidance covering the military aspects of the Force. That guidance has been incorporated in an operations plan and a set of contingency plans to prepare the Force to face

various potential scenarios. In addition, the Strategic Military Cell reviewed and adjusted, in consultation with UNIFIL and in the light of its additional mandated responsibilities and scope of operations, rules of engagement of UNIFIL. The Strategic Military Cell is currently developing a tool to monitor the progress of the Force in the fulfilment of its tasks under the expanded mandate, based on the evaluation of outcomes in relation to the activities performed by the Force. The tool should enable the Strategic Military Cell to assess the activities of the Force, as well as the value of and alignment with the strategic guidance provided. The alignment of troop and logistics requirements and corresponding memorandums of understanding with troop-contributing countries is ongoing, in support of the Military Division and the various components of the Office of Mission Support. Annex II provides a summary of the outputs of the Strategic Military Cell in the first six months of its operation.

12. The structure of the Strategic Military Cell was determined by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in consultation with countries contributing troops to UNIFIL. It is staffed primarily by military officers from troop-contributing countries and, in addition, draws on the resources of the Military Division, in particular but not limited to, the force generation functions of the Military Division. The selection of the 29 staff officers of the Strategic Military Cell was undertaken through the normal force generation process. The Director and Deputy Director of the Strategic Military Cell were identified through the normal selection process for senior military appointments. The Under-Secretary-General for peacekeeping decides on Strategic Military Cell policy and activities, in consultation with the Strategic Military Cell Director and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management.

13. Annex III provides the organization chart of the Strategic Military Cell. The Strategic Military Cell comprises the Office of the Director and six branches, as follows:

(a) The Office of the Director comprises the Director, the Deputy Director, a military officer, a Personal Assistant to the Director, and one Administrative Assistant. The Deputy Director also serves as the Chief of Staff of the Strategic Military Cell and is responsible for the day-to-day organization and management of activities. Those tasks include the direction and coordination of the Strategic Military Cell; liaison with other components of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other concerned entities in the Secretariat in connection with the military operations of UNIFIL; development and maintenance of the Cell's standard operating procedures; and the adjustment of the objectives, tasks and structure of the Strategic Military Cell, as required.

(b) The Personnel Branch (J1) coordinates and monitors personnel issues (rotations, injuries, deaths and repatriations), supports the military force generation process led by the Military Division for the Strategic Military Cell and UNIFIL. J1 is composed of 1 military staff officer and 1 civilian support staff.

(c) The Intelligence Branch (J2) provides intelligence reviews, assessments and strategic analyses regarding the UNIFIL area of operations to support the strategic guidance and planning functions of the Strategic Military Cell. The J2 is composed of 3 military staff officers and 1 non-commissioned officer.

(d) The Land Operation Branch (J3 Land) provides round-the-clock monitoring of UNIFIL operations to ensure Headquarters situational awareness, provides short-term strategic guidance and relays relevant operational information to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing countries. J3 Land is composed of 7 military staff officers and 1 non-commissioned officer.

(e) The Maritime Operation Branch (J3 Maritime) provides round-the-clock monitoring of the UNIFIL maritime component, as well as short-term strategic planning and operational expertise on maritime issues for the establishment and subsequent support to the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force. It is composed of 2 military staff officers.

(f) The Logistic Branch (J4) facilitates evaluation of logistic requirements for planning and provides logistic feasibility assessments for planning processes. J4 supports the negotiation processes related to the completion of memorandums of understanding with troop-contributing countries and letter-of-assist arrangements led by the Logistics Support Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It is composed of 4 military staff officers.

(g) The Planning Branch (J5) conducts medium- and long-term military planning to provide UNIFIL with planning guidance at the strategic level, and as a framework for UNIFIL operational planning. It is composed of 7 military staff officers and 1 non-commissioned officer.

14. The Strategic Military Cell carries out its activities within the framework of established Department of Peacekeeping Operations planning mechanisms, command and coordination processes, in which emphasis is placed on an integrated approach. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations is responsible for the direction of the Strategic Military Cell. The Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations provides strategic and executive direction for peacekeeping operations, including the coordination and integration of relevant information and contributions from within the Department, including the Strategic Military Cell, in order to promote the implementation of Security Council mandates and the overall political and strategic direction provided by the Under-Secretary-General. As with all peacekeeping operations, the Office of Operations continues to be responsible for fulfilling the Secretariat's reporting requirements on UNIFIL to the Security Council, to which Strategic Military Cell contributes.

15. As the focal point for the provision of military advice to UNIFIL, the Strategic Military Cell coordinates closely with the Military Division to ensure that the provision of military plans and guidance is consistent with the Organization's approach, policy application and procedures for current operations and planning across peacekeeping operations. The Military Division also leads on all aspects of the force generation process for United Nations peacekeeping operations, including for UNIFIL. In addition, the Strategic Military Cell works with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Situation Centre in monitoring the situation in Lebanon and the operations component of the Strategic Military Cell (i.e., J3 Branch) is co-located in the Situation Centre for that purpose. Coordination is also maintained between the Cell and the Office for Mission Support on issues related to logistics, finance and personnel support.

16. Coordination of the Strategic Military Cell within the integrated approach of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the planning and management of

United Nations peacekeeping operations is facilitated through a number of mechanisms. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell is a member of the senior management team of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and as such, attends tri-weekly meetings chaired by the Under-Secretary-General. The Strategic Military Cell participates in weekly UNIFIL working group meetings, chaired by the Office of Operations, bringing together Political Affairs Officers and representatives from the Military and Police Divisions and the Office for Mission Support, including its logistics, financial and personnel staff, to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach. The working group meetings cover updates on the operational situation and issues to be addressed at inter-departmental levels. Representatives from the various offices within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations also participate in the weekly videoconference meetings held between the Strategic Military Cell and UNIFIL. Regular UNIFIL Task Force meetings are convened at the senior level to discuss major strategic issues, and include the Director and Deputy Director of the Strategic Military Cell.

## III. Observations on the first six months of operation

17. Taking into account that the Strategic Military Cell was established just over six months ago, it is premature, at this stage, to undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of the Cell for the purpose of lessons learned. Notwithstanding, a number of preliminary observations can be made from the initial establishment and functioning of the Cell, which could provide a useful basis for the continued review of the Cell.

18. *A focused, mission-specific additional resource capability*. The Strategic Military Cell is a mechanism that was established to augment the capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to respond in an extremely short time frame to a new mandate and significant expansion of an existing peacekeeping operation in a highly sensitive and volatile political and operational environment. The new UNIFIL mandate includes specific tasks, notably maritime border support, that have not previously been undertaken in other United Nations peacekeeping operations. Moreover, the composition of the Strategic Military Cell reflects the distinct nature of the UNIFIL mission. UNIFIL is, in contrast to the majority of large United Nations peacekeeping operations, mandated to carry out primarily military and security tasks within a multifaceted overall mandate. Reflecting that mandate, UNIFIL — unlike other large United Nations peacekeeping operations — is headed by a Force Commander rather than a Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

19. *A temporary means of augmenting overstretched capacities*. In addition to the tasks noted in paragraph 18 above, the Strategic Military Cell was assigned specific military planning and strategic guidance responsibilities for UNIFIL that are similar to those carried out by the Military Division for other United Nations peacekeeping operations. That transpired at a time when the total number of United Nations peacekeeping personnel in the field was close to an unprecedented peak and continuing to rise in the face of additional and expanded peacekeeping responsibilities. The additional responsibilities included the planning for new operations, including the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste and the potential deployment to Darfur, assisting the planning for the special political mission in Nepal (United Nations Mission in Nepal), supporting the reconfiguration

of the African Union Mission in the Sudan, as well as supporting the election and transitional processes in complex peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Kosovo (UNMIK) and Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). The capacity of the Military Division has been particularly strained by the surge in peacekeeping, given its direct involvement in the planning of all United Nations peace operations, as well as its support responsibilities to ongoing peacekeeping operations including force generation, military advice and periodic technical assessment and review. Notwithstanding the recent surge in peacekeeping operations, the size of the Military Division remains at the level established at the end of 2001, following the reform process initiated in the context of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi Report), when the total number of military personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations was less than 40,000.

20. In specific contexts, the Strategic Military Cell bolsters the military capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to address urgent planning tasks in the face of sustained high demand for the planning and deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It enabled the rapid formulation of consistent strategic, operational and contingency plans for medium- and longer-term planning. It has also facilitated the maintenance of situational awareness between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNIFIL as well as the coordination between Headquarters and the field. Such additional and expanded strategic military capabilities can be particularly valuable when United Nations peacekeeping operations are mandated to carry out complex military tasks in highly volatile and potentially dangerous environments.

21. *A means of engaging troop-contributing countries' experience and resources in support of United Nations peacekeeping*. The early involvement of potential troop-contributing countries is an essential element for rapid and effective peacekeeping deployments. The planning expertise of troop-contributing countries contributes to ensuring that the development by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of an operation's concept of operations accurately reflects the criteria by which troop-contributing countries would be prepared to deploy and any restrictions on their employment. The early engagement of potential troop-contributing countries can also facilitate the negotiation process related to memorandums of understanding and subsequent effective rapid deployment of military contingents. Such engagement is particularly helpful for new and returning potential troop contributors which may not be familiar with all components of the memorandum of understanding negotiation process.

22. *The importance of incorporating additional planning capacities within existing structures and planning processes*. The planning and conduct of United Nations peacekeeping operations require an integrated effort that brings together the political, military, civilian, and mission support functions, as well as other components (such as police, judicial, corrections, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration), as appropriate. Integration is particularly essential in the context of multidimensional peacekeeping operations, which bring together political, military, civilian, humanitarian and support functions, and which has been the increasing norm in the establishment of recent United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is equally important for operations with a more limited scope, such as UNIFIL, to ensure that military guidance follows from and is consistent with political direction and that it incorporates force generation, logistics and materiel considerations. The reinforcement of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Headquarters planning

capacities should take place within the context of existing integrated frameworks. Likewise, the current Strategic Military Cell structure must operate with a high degree of internal integration to maximize efficiency and cooperation within Headquarters and between Headquarters and the field.

23. In the light of the emphasis placed on an integrated approach to planning and the importance of a clear identification of the responsibilities of the various components for maximum effectiveness, the Military Division should retain the overall responsibility for military planning in Headquarters. In the future, the reinforcement of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations capacities in this particular area should preferably operate from within the Military Division. That would facilitate the induction of reinforcements within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, enabling their smooth and efficient incorporation into integrated frameworks and planning processes at Headquarters. It would also enable the exchange of experience and best practices on United Nations peacekeeping operations and thereby contribute to the overall strengthening of the guidance and management provided by Headquarters to the field.

24. *The importance of interoperability between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and additional capabilities.* The provision of dedicated military planning experts with knowledge and experience in relevant areas can bring real added value to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations planning structures. Experts with experience of national and other multinational military planning processes can bring important benefits to the Department, enabling the informal exchange of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices among experienced military planners. Experts with knowledge of the field environment and context in question can be a valuable addition in the initial phases of the planning and deployment process and can facilitate liaison with troop-contributing countries. In order to maximize those benefits, it is considered important that short-term military planning reinforcements are fully versed in United Nations peacekeeping polices and procedures, including the principles of peacekeeping operations, legal aspects such as rules of engagement and the integrated mission planning process. Prior experience of the planning reinforcements in United Nations peacekeeping would also be advantageous.

25. *The need to maintain clarity of function between Headquarters and the field.* In the course of six decades of United Nations peacekeeping, a relatively effective and well-functioning division of responsibilities and functions has been established between the strategic role of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the operational functions of field operations. In the start-up phase of an operation, the Department engages in strategic and operational planning to establish the new operation as rapidly and efficiently as possible. Once the operation is established, and senior leadership and key functions are in place, the lead responsibility for planning lies with the field under the authority of the Head of Mission, in close and continuous coordination with Headquarters. The focus of Headquarters planning capacities, at that stage, turns on operational support issues which comprise routine monitoring and management support, contingency planning and scenario development, and periodic assessment and review, as well as the management of the ongoing force generation process and regular communications with troop-contributing countries. The division of labour enables mission operational planning to focus on activities in the mission area and to respond quickly and flexibly to issues on the ground as they evolve. Key to the success of that division of labour is

the maintenance of close communications and coordination between Headquarters and the field through a dedicated and integrated channel. The integrated operational team concept proposed in the context of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations reform agenda Peace Operations 2010 and in the context of current departmental restructuring proposals, will be a valuable tool in clarifying and strengthening the consultation mechanism between Headquarters and the field. It is considered important that short-term reinforcement of the Department's planning capacity supports and maintains the clarity of relationship between the strategic and operational levels in United Nations peacekeeping.

26. *The need to adapt additional capacities to the life cycle of the mission.* As the start-up phase of an operation concludes, and the focus of Headquarters shifts to operational planning support functions (in addition to ongoing strategic guidance), it is important to ensure that Headquarters planning capacities and expertise are sufficiently flexible and maintained to carry out the precise tasks required at each particular phase in the mission life cycle. The continued provision of additional planning capacities can help ensure effective operational planning support, particularly in complex operating environments where substantial levels of situational awareness, risk assessment and contingency planning continue to be required and which, in turn, necessitate continued close monitoring of the operation at Headquarters. In large operations, monitoring and review of force requirements, in addition to the ongoing management of the force generation process, are an important additional component of Headquarters support to the field. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations military capacities and structures must be sufficiently robust to adequately perform these support tasks. Where the Department is reinforced by additional planning capacities, it may be necessary to review and adapt initial reinforcement mechanisms over the course of the operation's life cycle.

## IV. Conclusions and observations

27. It has become a truism to observe that each United Nations peacekeeping operation is unique and a reflection of the particular strategic, political and operational environment in which it is deployed. Each of the 18 peace operations managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations brings with it a unique set of challenges for the planning and conduct of the operation. The Strategic Military Cell is a reflection of the context and the mandate under which an expanded UNIFIL was deployed in September 2006. The role, functions and structure of the Strategic Military Cell will continue to depend substantially on developments in Lebanon affecting UNIFIL and the progress in implementing Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). In that context, the ongoing review and assessment of the Cell will be an integral aspect of the wider and continuing review of progress in the implementation of the mandate of UNIFIL.

28. At the same time, the Strategic Military Cell represents an innovation to support immediate Headquarters planning needs, at a time when the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is strained, through the provision of additional capacities. In periods of surge, such initiatives may play a useful role in reinforcing the Department's capacities to respond efficiently and effectively to urgent requirements. At the same time, as new elements in an already complex structure, the introduction of additional resources inevitably presents challenges for Department planning and management. To that extent, it is important to consider

carefully the best means by which valuable additional resources can be incorporated and employed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the fulfilment of the mandates provided by Member States. Strategic Military Cell is the first such experiment and represents one potential way of providing additional planning capacities and expertise, in this case, military planning, to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Other potential means of reinforcement may exist and may be necessary to explore in future contexts and peacekeeping operations. The ongoing review of the Strategic Military Cell will be an important means of building knowledge of the strengths as well as the challenges of such reinforcement mechanisms.

29. In the face of sustained global demand for United Nations peacekeeping, the temporary reinforcement of the planning capabilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations can provide an interim, case-by-case solution to specific requirements. It cannot replace, however, a capable and sufficiently resourced Headquarters. Nor can it provide a long-term solution to the challenge of equipping United Nations Headquarters to meet its mandated responsibility to plan and support every United Nations peacekeeping operation responsively and effectively. I look forward to working closely with Member States to collectively strengthen the Organization's capacity to plan and conduct peace operations. To address this issue, proposals for the strengthening of the Military Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have been included in the context of the proposed budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, which will be considered by the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixty-first session.

## V. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

30. **The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report.**

# Annex I

## Terms of reference of the Strategic Military Cell

### A. Purpose

The purpose of the Strategic Military Cell is, on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and consistent with his/her overall direction, to provide strategic military guidance and direction to the head of the UNIFIL military component. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell, as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations focal point for UNIFIL military advice, will provide strategic military guidance and direction for UNIFIL in order to effectively implement mandated tasks.

The Director of the Strategic Military Cell is the focal point for the provision of UNIFIL military advice to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, in close coordination with the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Office of Operations, Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support and the Military Adviser. On behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and consistent with his political direction, the Director of the Strategic Military Cell provides strategic military guidance and direction to the head of the UNIFIL military component.

### B. Functions and tasks

**Director — Key tasks**

1. The three key tasks of the Director of the Strategic Military Cell are:

(a) To monitor, assess and report on UNIFIL military operations and ensure forces are employed in accordance with the UNIFIL military-strategic concept of operations;

(b) To conduct routine and non-routine planning at the strategic level in accordance with the direction of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations;

(c) To ensure integration of Strategic Military Cell staff and functions with other Department of Peacekeeping Operations functions to enable enhanced departmental coordination and results.

**Director — Enabling tasks**

2. The five enabling tasks of the Director of the Strategic Military Cell are:

(a) To contribute to strategic-level integrated mission planning within United Nations Headquarters for all military matters affecting UNIFIL, including mandate reviews;

(b) In accordance with the direction of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Peacekeeping Operations policies, and in close coordination with Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management, to keep UNIFIL troop-contributing countries informed through regular briefings on UNIFIL military component development, activities and related issues;

(c) To monitor and assess UNIFIL military component operations and inform the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management of incidents and developments, particularly potential and imminent threats to mission personnel and property and risks to successful mandate implementation;

(d) To contribute to Department of Peacekeeping Operations crisis response capacity by conducting crisis action planning in accordance with Department of Peacekeeping Operations policy;

(e) To periodically, or as required, review the effectiveness of the military component and, in consultation with Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management, to recommend adjustments to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, particularly in regard to the concept of operations and rules of engagement.

**Strategic Military Cell — Routine tasks**

3. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell will carry out the above-listed key and enabling tasks through the assignment of duties and responsibilities to the Strategic Military Cell in order to achieve the following:

(a) Provide military advice on all UNIFIL military matters as and when required, and as requested by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management;

(b) Provide technical military advice and direction to the head of the UNIFIL military component consistent with the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations political direction;

(c) Participate in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Working Group on Lebanon/UNIFIL chaired by the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division, Office of Operations;

(d) Review as and when necessary the UNIFIL concept of operations and, in consultation with Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management, recommend any adjustments to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations;

(e) Review the UNIFIL military operation order and, consistent with the provisions of the concept of operations and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations political direction, provide technical military guidance and direction to the UNIFIL head of military component;

(f) Review as and when necessary the performance of the UNIFIL military component;

(g) Following any adjustment to the UNIFIL concept of operations, review and amend "force requirements" to enable the Military Division Force Generation Service to seek appropriate forces from troop-contributing countries;

(h) Following any adjustment to the UNIFIL concept of operations and when otherwise required, review the UNIFIL rules of engagement and in consultation with Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management, recommend any adjustments to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations;

(i) Contribute, in consultation with other Department of Peacekeeping Operations entities and under the leadership of the Office of Operations, to all reviews of the UNIFIL Security Council mandate;

(j) Participate, as appropriate, in any technical review visits to the UNIFIL mission area;

(k) Coordinate approval for the hosting of any external visitors to the Strategic Military Cell in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations;

(l) Coordinate Strategic Military Cell briefings and presentations;

(m) Maintain liaison with other Department of Peacekeeping Operations offices and divisions, and other bodies relevant to UNIFIL military operations;

(n) Develop and maintain the Strategic Military Cell standard operating procedures;

(o) Conduct, in coordination with the Military Adviser, a Department of Peacekeeping Operations Strategic Military Cell induction programme for arriving Strategic Military Cell staff members;

(p) Review the Strategic Military Cell mission, role, tasks and structure as and when required, recommending any adjustments in consultation with Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

## C. Director UNIFIL Strategic Military Cell reporting responsibilities

1. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell reports to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and is required also to consult closely with the Assistant Secretaries-General of the Office of Operations and the Office of Mission Support, and the Military Adviser to ensure appropriate departmental coordination.

2. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell is a member of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations senior management team for the purposes of enabling contribution to executive deliberations and decision-making with respect to the UNIFIL peacekeeping operation.

3. The Director of the Strategic Military Cell shall neither seek nor receive instructions other than from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations or those other senior Department of Peacekeeping Operations officials authorized to act on his behalf.

# Annex II

## Summary of outputs for the first six months

| | |
|---|---|
| Force requirement review | 1 |
| Force Headquarter structure review | 1 |
| Sector Headquarter structure review | 1 |
| Strategic operational plans | 1 |
| Troop requirements | 8 |
| Time for generating and deploying UNIFIL forces | 4 months |
| Rules of engagement revision | 1 |
| Contingency plans | 3 |
| Strategic "ad hoc" guidance | 2 |
| Lebanese Armed Forces donor countries bilateral meetings | 10 |
| Troop-contributing country informal meetings | 3 |
| Technical arrangement between the Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL | 1 |
| Weekly assessment reports to the Under-Secretary-General | 15 |
| Daily UNIFIL monitoring and assessment briefings | 150 |
| Logistics Support Division support for Lebanese Armed Forces fuel supply | 1 |
| Bi-weekly logistic conference contribution | 8 |
| Weekly UNIFIL-Department of Peacekeeping Operations videoconference | 20 |
| Outcome based assessment process | ongoing |
| Memorandums of understanding formal negotiations | 28 |

# Annex III

## Organization chart